

**Video**  
**Welcome to Mississippi Stimulus Summit**  
**11:45 a.m., Thursday, April 9, 2009**

Good afternoon, and welcome.

Fifty-eight days ago, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act into law. Its stated purpose was “to create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century.”

As all of you who followed the debate in Congress and have kept up with the news since know, many questions have been raised about the size and scope of the stimulus package, and how the money can be used.

Fact is, this is such a complex, massive project that we still don’t know everything we need to know. But, more information is coming down from the federal government every day and it’s time to move ahead with exploring what the package means for Mississippi.

My office is very actively engaged in finding out what the stimulus package means for Mississippi. We will accept the vast majority of the money – most of it goes to education, Medicaid, human services, and infrastructure improvements. There is one piece of the stimulus involving unemployment insurance that we won’t accept because it would result in a big new tax increase on Mississippi’s employers when the federal money runs out.

I regret I cannot be there personally today; I am out of state, meeting with other Governors on issues such as taxes, education, and health care, and, yes, comparing notes on the stimulus.

In the spirit of openness and transparency, I've invited state agency heads and state officials, legislators, local officials, and the public to this Mississippi Stimulus Summit. While not all the federal rules and regulations have been written, we do have details to share about how the stimulus will work in our state.

I encourage you to listen to the individual presentations. I know you'll have questions because, after all, 58 days isn't all that much time to digest everything that's included in the new law.

But I hope you will leave here today with a greater understanding of Mississippi's piece of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act than you had when you got here.

Thank you for coming. Let's get started.